

EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008

Hanaford School Cafeteria

200 Middle Road

East Greenwich, RI 02818

**ANY ITEMS CONSIDERED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MAY BE
SUBJECT TO A**

VOTE

The School Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. in the Hanaford School Cafeteria. Members present were: Sue Cienki, Chair, William Day, Vice-Chair, Merrill Friedemann, Anne Palumbo, Mary Ellen Winters, JeanAnn Guliano, and Susan Records, as well as Charles Meyers, Maryanne Crawford, Helen O'Hara, Jerry Nettik, and Robert Wilmarth. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

2. Public Comments

Jodi Nichipor, Jefferson Drive, was sad to hear that the choral program may not be an opportunity for East Greenwich students. Mrs. Cienki responded that the Superintendent put this program back in the budget but asked people to make their presence known at the Town Council meetings as there may be further cuts by the Council.

Mr. Meyers stated that he found a savings because Mrs. Crawford was in negotiations with West Bay Community Health and Blue Cross and was able to negotiate with Blue Cross to reduce the working rates. It was noted that West Bay Community Health reduced their

administrative fee.

Joanne Leach, Graham Way, congratulated the choral program supporters. She also asked the Committee to find a way to support the behavior program at Cole for students who need the support.

Sherry Cruz, Carrs Pond Road, gave the Committee a petition in support of the choral program.

3. Recognitions

3.1 The following teachers and students were recognized for being selected as winners in the R.I. Junior All-State Music Festival from Cole: Benjamin Pallant, Christopher Millman, Ivy Shen, Anna Basile, Rachel Rossetti, Elizabeth Kerin, Alexandra Leveillee and Vikram Murthy.

4. New Business

4.1 Parental Leave Extension

4.1.1 On a motion made by Mrs. Palumbo and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the parental leave extension of Ramona McGillivray, Science Teacher at Cole Middle School, until the end of the 2007-2008 school year

5. Fields Design Update from the Gifford Group-This item was tabled.

6. Superintendent's Contract Extension

Mrs. Friedemann made a motion to table this item until the teachers' contract is settled. There was no second to the motion. Mrs. Guliano asked about increasing the Superintendent's co-share to 20% the first year and 30% the second year. Mrs. Palumbo made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, to award the Superintendent a 2.4% raise for the 2007-2008 school year with a 20% co-share. Mr. Day

stated that the Committee is only voting on a one year raise and co-share with the

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next year based on performance. Mrs. Friedemann noted the state superintendent's pays in the Providence Journal recently. She feels East Greenwich is paying more for fewer students. Mrs. Friedemann asked what happens in a week after the negotiation meeting which may determine what salaries administrators receive. Mrs. Guliano stated that salaries in East Greenwich have been on the high end and that has been promoted in the past. She also noted that it is starting to be addressed by lowering percentage increases and increasing the co-share.

Mrs. Records feels that salary ranges need to be in place for all administrators, and we should look at experience when hiring. She added that Mr. Meyers deserves an increase but it demoralizes teachers when an administrator receives a raise first. She feels the increase should be set when the contract is negotiated.

On the motion to approve a 2.4 percent increase and a 20% co-pay for the Superintendent for the 2007-2008 school year, Mrs. Cienki, Mr. Day, Mrs. Palumbo and Mrs. Winters voted yes, and Mrs. Friedemann, Mrs. Guliano and Mrs. Records voted no. The motion passed.

7. On a motion made by Mr. Day and seconded by Mrs. Palumbo, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the out-of-state field trip to New York City on May 7, 2008 for high school science students.

8. France trip for high school students during spring vacation in 2009
Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to

approve the France exchange trip for 2009. Mr. Gravelin, the advisor for the trip, stated that letters were sent to all host families telling them it is a non-alcoholic trip. He also noted that the international insurance is in place.

9. In\$ite Report – This item was tabled.

10. Fiscal Reports

Mrs. Crawford stating that heating costs have stabilized, but there were a few insurance claims this year and insurance will only cover one of them. She expects a surplus at the end of the year which will be transferred to school lunch.

11. FY 2009 Budget Deliberations

Mrs. Friedemann asked if there is a plan to close Eldredge School. The Superintendent noted that there was a discussion with RIDE of closing an elementary school, and there is a strong feeling in the community of going to K-5 elementary schools. Mrs. Records stated that if we close an elementary school we want to make sure we are all looking at cross-districting.

Mr. Wilmarth was asked to do an analysis of each school to see which school has the most needs. Mrs. Cienki stated that putting K-2 back into Eldredge is not feasible. Mrs. Friedemann stated that Meadowbrook School has a lot of problems and that land could be commercially marketable. Mrs. Guliano asked about adding money to the high school for heating and ventilating since we don't have a capital improvement fund. Mr. Wilmarth noted that water usage is up because we weren't fully assessed by the town previously.

Mrs. Cienki asked what the impact would be of cutting middle school

sports. Mr. Varrecchione stated that he doesn't know of any other districts that have cut middle school sports. He noted that we can't assess user fees but legislation passed in Coventry to assess user fees. We will ask Senator Raptakis to put this same legislation in for East Greenwich. Mrs. Friedemann suggested we do an analysis for each sport on a rotation basis. Mr. Varrecchione stated that he doesn't see a significant cost for middle school sports. It was noted that the middle school concept

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promotes more involvement in schools and it is cheaper to run intramural programs. Mr. Meyers stated that sooner or later middle school sports will be considered for cuts.

Mrs. Palumbo asked about the Behavior Development program at Cole and asked what other model would be available if that program is cut. Mr. Zajac, Cole Principal, noted that he is looking at next year and also stated that the discipline has diminished because of the middle school program. Mr. Zajac stated that based on the numbers it is difficult to maintain programs for next year. He also noted that he and Mrs. Meyer work with kids and they serve In School Suspension with them. Mrs. Friedemann asked if we could contract out for the Behavior Development teacher, saving on benefits and retirement. Mr. Meyers stated that we contract out for a BD person now at the elementary level.

Mrs. Cienki asked if we could eliminate any building paraprofessionals. The principals all stated that all building

paraprofessionals are needed.

Mr. Nettik stated that there were increases in technology and lease payments on hardware at Cole and the high school. Mrs. Records asked if our email is encrypted. Mr. Nettik responded that he doesn't know of any school system in the state that has their email encrypted.

Mrs. O'Hara stated that she will need a half-time teacher and half-time paraprofessional in the pre-school for the next school year. She expects 13 new students. Mr. Meyers stated that we have to look at the preK-12 special education program.

Mr. Christopher Boie asked for clarification on Mr. Meyers' raise and co-pay for the 2007-2008 school year. He understands that it is a 2.4% increase with a 20% co-pay. He asked if Mr. Meyers was going to receive a retro-active salary increase, noting that the teachers' morale will be even lower if the Superintendent received retro pay. Mrs. Cienki stated that the salary increase would go back to July 1, 2007. Donna Hayes stated that it is her understanding that the only difference in the budget so far is that the choral program is re-instated, funded by money from savings in health care.

12. School Committee Concerns

Judith Cavanaugh stated that we are in difficult financial times and across the board East Greenwich is at the high end but they are truly in the middle because they don't have longevity.

The following items may be discussed in Executive Session:

13. On a motion made by Mr. Day and seconded by Mrs. Palumbo, the Committee, being polled individually, voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 8:45p.m. under RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (1) (2) for

Teacher Contract Negotiations.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Giuliani

Secretary